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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/970,443	10/02/2001	Donald O. Castell	18596-004	9610

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IP PATENTS
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[REDACTED] EXAMINER

NASSER, ROBERT L

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
3736	11

DATE MAILED: 07/09/2003

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

EC

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)
	09/970,443	CASTELL ET AL.
	Examiner Robert L. Nasser	Art Unit 3736

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on _____.
- 2a) This action is FINAL. 2b) This action is non-final.
- 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) Claim(s) 1-74 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) Claim(s) 1-37, 45-71 and 74 is/are rejected.
- 7) Claim(s) 38-44, 72 and 73 is/are objected to.
- 8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
 Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) approved b) disapproved by the Examiner.
 If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 a) All b) Some * c) None of:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
 * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
 a) The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)	4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____ .
2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)	5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) 6 .	6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ .

The drawings are objected to under 37 CFR 1.83(a). The drawings must show every feature of the invention specified in the claims. Therefore, the third probe of claim 34 must be shown or the feature(s) canceled from the claim(s). No new matter should be entered.

A proposed drawing correction or corrected drawings are required in reply to the Office action to avoid abandonment of the application. The objection to the drawings will not be held in abeyance.35 U.S.C. 101 reads as follows:

Whoever invents or discovers any new and useful process, machine, manufacture, or composition of matter, or any new and useful improvement thereof, may obtain a patent therefor, subject to the conditions and requirements of this title.

Claims 13-20, and 25-31 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 101 because the claimed invention is directed to non-statutory subject matter. Specifically, these claims recite that one of the sensors is at a position relative to the lower or upper sphincter or in a specific portion of the esophagus. The human body is non-statuory subject matter and cannot positively be recited. As such, applicant should recite that the sensors are adapted for being positioned or positionable or use similar language to inferentially claim the position. Clarification is required.

The following is a quotation of the first paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall contain a written description of the invention, and of the manner and process of making and using it, in such full, clear, concise, and exact terms as to enable any person skilled in the art to which it pertains, or with which it is most nearly connected, to make and use the same and shall set forth the best mode contemplated by the inventor of carrying out his invention.

Claims 10 and 35-38 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph, as containing subject matter which was not described in the specification in such a way as

to reasonably convey to one skilled in the relevant art that the inventor(s), at the time the application was filed, had possession of the claimed invention. These claims recite that the first and second probes are bifurcated. Bifurcated means branched or split into two branches. Neither probe is disclosed as being branched. Applicant appears to be claiming that the probes are connected at a common point, as shown in figure 2. Applicant should amend the claims to use different terminology.

Claim 17, is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. Claim 17 recites that the first sensor is 5 cm from the distal end of the first probe. However, claim 15 says that the first sensor is located proximate the lower esophageal sphincter. There is no disclosure for the sensor proximate the LES to be located 5 cm from the distal end. Indeed, figures 2 and 4 show the sensor at the distal end. It appears that applicant should refer to the second sensor. Clarification is required.

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

Claims 1-6, 8-22, 25-27, 35-68, 70, 71, and 74 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by the Shaker et al article entitled "Esophagopharyngeal Distribution of Refluxed Gastric Acid in Patients with Reflux Laryngitis. Shaker et al discloses two probes, a first one with a single pH sensor

adapted to be positioned at a position 5 cm above the LES and a second probe with a second and third pH sensor 10 cm apart (which is "about 7 cm") being configured to straddle the UES, The device further has a recorder which correlates the two signals with respect to each other and to a user inputted marker signal used to mark some of the claimed events. It has the remaining claim features, noting that the distances in Shaker are "about" the same as the claimed distances.

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 23, 24, and 69 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Shaker et al in view of Reichstein. Shaker et al does not have the stabilizing element. Reichstein shows an alternate pH probe that has such a stabilizing element. Hence, it would have been obvious to modify Shaker to configure the sensor to have such a stabilizing element, to avoid movement during measurement.

Claims 35-44 and 72-73 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

Essen-Moller and Stuebe et al show esophageal pH monitoring devices.

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Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Robert L. Nasser whose telephone number is (703) 308-3251. The examiner can normally be reached on MAXIFLEX.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Max Hindenburg can be reached on (703) 308-3130. The fax phone numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are (703) 308-0758 for regular communications and (703) 308-0758 for After Final communications.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 308-0858.

ROBERT L. NASSER
PRIMARY EXAMINER

Robert L. Nasser
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 3736

Robert L. Nasser

RLN
June 30, 2003